

UNTOLD

STORY LEADS FROM MONTANA

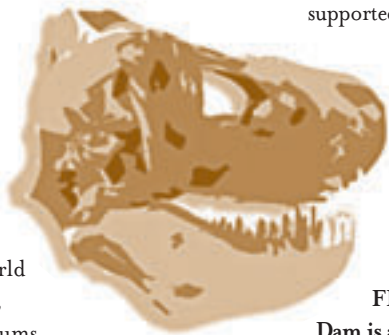


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In the Business of Bones

A building where they store bones? That would raise eyebrows anywhere, but it should attract news hounds as well as fossil hounds to northeastern Montana.

Missouri River Country is home to a young business named Fort Peck Paleontology Inc. (FPPI). FPPI operates a paleontological field station and warehouse in an old U.S. Army Corps of Engineers building at the Fort Peck Dam. This is where paleontologists are building a life-size model of Peck's Rex, a tyrannosaur whose skeleton was found in 1997 in the badlands of the Hell Creek formation, south of the Fort Peck Dam. In a sprawling building that once served as a laundry, fossil finds are stored and catalogued. Dinosaur bones are prepared, molded and cast into models that will be sent the world over to paleontologists, research labs and museums. FPPI has already attracted the interest of travelers and will serve as a great



Assembling a dinosaur skeleton requires a lot of room.

companion attraction to the Fort Peck Dam Interpretive Center and Museum, which has scheduled a grand opening for 2005. Residents and businesses of northeastern Montana have generously supported the field station with materials, money and volunteer time. A small gift shop in the building sells cast replicas of prehistoric creatures and other uncommon items.

The shared website of FPPI and the Fort Peck

Dam is at www.fortpeckpaleo.com.

Also check out www.pecksrrex.com or e-mail fpfi@nemontel.net.



FPPI experts handle bones with care.

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Give Your Regards to The Broadway

A couple of documentary producers briefly put down their cameras, picked up hammer and nails and have breathed new life into an historic building in Philipsburg. Now they're filmmakers and innkeepers.

What started out 110 years ago as a store has become the Broadway Hotel. Its nine guest rooms and the Big Cowboy Room, a lounge and meeting room with fireplace, now occupy the second floor of the building in downtown "P'burg." Jim and Sue Jenner are former Washington residents who came to love Philipsburg and the surrounding mountains and rivers after 30 years of fishing trips to the area. They bought the building on West Broadway in 1989 and have furnished the hotel's nine rooms and suites in a variety of themes that celebrate local customs as well as far-away places. One room is done up with Americana from Route 66, the subject of several documentaries the Jenners made. The Discovery suite has huge windows

looking south to the ski area of the same name. The Britannia suite is furnished with family heirlooms and items that reflect Sue's upbringing in the Midlands of Great Britain. There are rooms that pay homage to life on the ranch, and to the local work traditions of logging and mining. The couple loves living in a place that's an easy drive from Rock Creek, the Big Hole River, the Blackfoot, the Clark Fork and even Yellowstone Park. And they love welcoming

guests to their adopted town. "I like to call it the little town that could," Jim says. With its antique streetlights, historic buildings, and all the improvements made by the residents and business owners, "it's been literally boot-strapped by the people who live here."

The Broadway Hotel can be reached at 406 859-8000 or 800 877-4436 and has a website under construction at broadwaymontana.com



The Broadway Hotel in Philipsburg.

Courtesy Jim Jenner

Coming to Billings: Writers and Warhol

Billings is brimming with culture this summer. The city will host the second annual High Plains BookFest July 9-11. The festival examines literary topics and themes of interest to regional writers and readers. More than 75 seasoned and emerging writers from Montana, Wyoming, the Dakotas, Canada, and the Native tribes therein will be on hand for readings, workshops and panel discussions. The festival is open to the public and many of the daytime events require no admission fee. Evening events include two readings at the Alberta Bair Theater and a Friday night reception at the Yellowstone Art Museum. At the museum, running concurrently with the BookFest, are two major exhibits, one featuring the collection of the Charles M. Bair Family, local pioneers, and another featuring the work of pop culture icon Andy Warhol. The Bair Collection of Western and Native American Art is on display from June 18 through January 9, 2005. These pieces are a far cry from Andy Warhol's *Dream America*, running through July 18, which features 88 of Warhol's works. Warhol's subjects are as varied as Marilyn Monroe, Campbell Soup, Chairman Mao, Mick Jagger, and Warhol's noted "Cowboys and Indians" series, probably the only common ground to be found between the two exhibits.

For details, visit www.downtownbillings.org. Writers and publishers interested in participating should contact Corby Skinner at 406 248-1685, extension 231.



Andy Warhol's "Marilyn" from 1968.

Courtesy Yellowstone Art Museum

A Woman's Place is Outdoors

Guys can't have all the fun. Women who love the outdoors are learning skills that can enhance their enjoyment, thanks to a program called Becoming an Outdoorswoman (BOW). The program began in 1991 in Wisconsin. Women have responded enthusiastically to this opportunity to learn outdoor skills in a relaxed, noncompetitive atmosphere. More than 80 weekend-long workshops are now offered every year to women in 40 states and Canada. In

Montana, the state Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FW&P) is a leading sponsor of BOW workshops. The workshops offer instruction in hunting and

shooting, archery, fishing, and other outdoor skills like plant and bird identification, canoeing and camping. Recent additions to the curriculum have delved deeper into topics like pheasant, turkey or deer hunts, spelunking, sea kayaking, and horse packing. This year's summer workshop in Montana will be offered August 13-15 at Lubrecht Experimental Forest in the Blackfoot River Valley. Accommodations are fittingly rustic, but with modern amenities

and hearty meals. A weekend for beginning birders is scheduled for June 25-27.

For more information, contact **Liz Lodman** at Montana FW&P, 406 444-2615, llodman@state.mt.us.



High five times two.

A New State Park

Montana will soon have a new state park. Tower Rock State Park will be a 137-acre site along the Missouri River near Cascade. Meriwether Lewis loved it there. As he wrote in his journal on July 16, 1805, "At this place there is a large rock of 400 feet high which stands immediately in the gap which the Missouri makes on it's passage from the mountains... This rock I called the tower. It may be ascended with some difficulty nearly to it's summit and from it there is a most pleasing view of the country we are now about to leave. From it I saw that evening immense herds of buffaloe in the plains below." The site hasn't changed much since Lewis described it and the state intends to keep it that way. No improvements are planned except a small parking area and possible trails and interpretive displays considered for the future. While the site isn't yet open to visitors, it is a prominent rock outcropping easily spotted on the west side of Interstate 15 at the Hardy Creek exit.

For more information on Tower Rock State Park, contact Diane Tipton, Montana FW&P, 406 444-3079. For more information on other state parks visit www.fwp.state.mt.us.



Tower Rock State Park

Courtesy Kristi Hager, Montana DOT

Undaunted Stewardship

Montana travelers will gain access to several historic sites related to the Lewis & Clark Expedition, thanks to ranchers who have shown themselves to be worthy stewards of the private land they own and the public land they use for grazing and other uses. The ranchers have volunteered and signed contracts to preserve the historic sites on their land and have been honored for their "Undaunted Stewardship" of the land. The "Undaunted Stewardship" program, initiated by Congress in 2000, certifies qualifying ranches for adhering to sustainable grazing and land management practices, helps ranches develop side businesses serving tourists in hopes of enhancing rural economies, and conducts public education programs about rangeland stewardship and the environmental and cultural benefits of ranching. An interpretive display is now open on the Mission Ranch, east of Livingston, and seven others are under development, to be ready for the upcoming bicentennial celebration of the expedition. Two are located inside the Missouri River Breaks National Monument and will be accessible only to river floaters.

For more information, contact **Tamara Beardsley** or **Steve Pilcher** at Montana Stockgrowers Association, 406-442-3420.



Essential Summer Gear: Snowboard

The typical ski and snowboard season in North America runs from November to April. But if you happen to own an atypical skiing destination—say, Red Lodge International Ski and Snowboard Camp—you can have an atypical season.

When the white powder has melted into white water at other resorts across the continent, the Ski and Snowboard Camp is hosting clubs, camps and other powder junkies in May, June and July. "Along with Mount Hood in Oregon and Whistler in Canada, it's one of the few places for summer skiing," says the camp's co-owner, Rob Hart. But it's not for the weak of knees: it's considered the continent's steepest training site.

Lofty visions led to the building of the lofty camp. In 1966, Austrian skiers Pepi Gramshammer and Eric Sailer founded the ski area and enticed top European Olympic skiers and coaches to train young American racers. Today, the area still draws an elite crowd. Ski pros from around the world come to train, while



The ski and snowboard season stretches into July in the Beartooth Mountains.

companies such as Teton Gravity Research come to capture footage for their extreme skiing and snowboarding videos.

Part of what makes this all possible is the location. The camp is located at an elevation of 10,900 feet on Beartooth Pass, south of Red Lodge on US 212. Connecting the town of Red Lodge with Yellowstone National Park, this stretch of highway has been hailed as one of America's most scenic drives. But it's also the road to Nirvana for skiers and boarders who want to work on their big mountain and free ride skills. Twin Lakes Headwall

has 600 acres of terrain (1,000 vertical feet lift-served), with pitches up to a gulp-inducing 50 degrees. Shuttles reach an additional 3,000 vertical feet of lift and terrain nearby: headwalls, bowls, chutes, trees, cliffs, gullies and cornice drops.

The ski area is open to the public, with guide service and coaching available. Needless to say, the terrain is for advanced intermediate skiers and above.

For more information, contact Rob Hart at 406-446-3446.

Orders and Families and Species, Oh My!

You can't take it with you, unless you have a lightweight laptop and wireless Internet, but now there's an online field guide to wildlife identification. The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks has teamed up with the state Natural Heritage Program to launch an Internet site



Be able to tell the species of trout you catch.

where you can find the answer to questions like "Is this a lake trout or a brookie, a Westslope cutthroat or a Yellowstone cutthroat?" The site includes hundreds of pages of information on how to identify birds, reptiles, fish, invertebrates, amphibians and mammals. The user clicks on one of these categories to get lists of orders, families, and species. The site also can link the user to additional information on endangered species in the state and can help hunters pass a bear identification test. Bear hunters have to pass the test in order to hunt black bears without injuring the protected grizzly population.

Try it out at fwp.state.mt.us/fieldguide.

FROM MONTANA

The diversity of events, places and people in Montana is almost as wide as the state itself. We hope to give you a taste of that diversity with this quarterly newsletter. In addition, the following services are offered to editors, writers and producers:

Visual Materials

Color slides and stock video footage are available for editorial use.

Writer/Photographer Referrals

We can put you in contact with many of Montana's most talented and experienced freelance writers and photographers.

Editorial Copy/Calendar of Events

We can provide background information or editorial copy for many subjects. We also maintain a calendar of events for the entire state.

Individual Attention

If you need the latest vacation guide and road map of Montana, a liaison with other government agencies or detailed information to fit a specific story angle, we're here to assist you.

Contact Ric Bourie, Publicity Manager
ric@visitmt.com / 406-841-2893